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# Research Highlights

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## Growth Beyond the Perimeter: Population Change in Manitoba's Capital Region

### Introduction

The Capital Region comprises the City of Winnipeg and 15 outlying municipalities that roughly approximate Winnipeg's commuter shed. Together they are home to 711,500 people, a total representing just under 64% of the population of Manitoba.

The management of growth in the Capital Region has been the focus of much debate and research over the past decade.[1] Uneven development across the region has been an issue of particular interest. This report highlights aspects of the current spatial distribution of population in the Capital Region and how that distribution has changed over the past five years, with emphasis placed on outlying municipalities. Based on data reported in the 2001 Census of Canada, the report includes analysis of aggregate population levels and age cohort dynamics as well as a brief examination of the pace of population growth in the Capital Region compared to the experience of other large metropolitan areas on the Canadian prairies.

### Aggregate Population Trends

Between 1996 and 2001, the Capital Region's population expanded, but at a relatively modest pace. The net gain recorded was about 5,500 people, representing a five year growth rate of less than one percent. As Table 1 shows, growth during this period has been disproportionately shared. For every one person added to the City of Winnipeg's population, four were added in the outlying municipalities.

Despite its dramatically slower rate of growth, the City of Winnipeg continues to dominate the population structure of the Region. In 2001, almost 87% of the Capital Region's population resided within the City of Winnipeg.

### Population Distribution Among Outlying Communities

The 92,000 non-Winnipeg residents of the Capital Region are distributed among 15 municipalities that range in size from a minimum of just over 1,000 to a maximum of 12,600 (Table 2). Geographically, the population is also distributed in a uneven fashion. The six largest municipalities (Springfield, St. Andrews,

Selkirk, St. Clements, Tache and East St. Paul) are all located to the east and north-east of Winnipeg (Figure 1). Together, they comprise about 44% of land area occupied by the 15 outlying municipalities, but almost 64% of the population.

Municipalities located on the western side of the Capital Region have noticeably smaller populations. Cartier, Headingly, Rosser and St. Francois Xavier collectively account for about 10% of the land area outside of Winnipeg but only five percent of the population.

The uneven spatial distribution of population is also reflected in the population density of the municipalities (Figure 2). As would be expected, the highest densities are found in the region's three urban centres: Winnipeg, Selkirk and Stonewall. Among the rural municipalities, East St. Paul is the most densely populated with a density in the order of 180 persons per square kilometer, followed by West St. Paul with just under 50 persons per square kilometer. Remaining rural municipalities tend to be divided into two groups. Those in the eastern portion of the region fall into a group with densities in the 10 to 20 persons per square kilometer range. Those in the western portion, with the exception of Headingley, record densities of less than 10 persons per square kilometer.

## Population Change in Outlying Municipalities: 1996-2001

Figure 3 displays the percentage change in population for each municipality in the Capital Region. Thirteen municipalities gained population in the 1996-2001 period, and of these the fastest growth rates were posted by the corridor of rural municipalities stretching northeast of Winnipeg. The most rapid expansion in this corridor occurred in East St. Paul where the population grew by nearly 20 percent. A similarly rapid growth rate was also recorded by Headingley but it did so from a considerably smaller initial base population. Two municipalities, the City of Selkirk and the Rural Municipality of Ritchot, suffered population declines in this period.

Population change may also be gauged by examining how the gain in population in the outlying municipalities has been spatially distributed (Table 3). When measured in this fashion, the most dramatic growth is found in East St. Paul where population expanded by 1,240 persons. This represents more than one-quarter of the total net gain in population. An additional 25% of the overall population gain was captured by St. Clements and St. Andrews. These numbers are testimony to the attractiveness of the north-east corridor of the region for ex-urban residential development.

## Aging Population in the Capital Region

As in other locales across Canada, the population of the Capital Region is aging (Table 4). Between 1996 and 2001, the number of seniors in the Capital Region increased by just over four percent. By 2001, almost 97,000 or 13.6% of the region's residents were aged 65 and over.

The relative size of the senior population is smaller in the outlying municipalities than in the City of Winnipeg. However, the rate of growth of the senior population between 1996 and 2001 was three times greater in the outlying municipalities than in Winnipeg.

The relative presence of seniors does vary among the outlying municipalities (Figure 4). Only four percent of Tache's population is 65 and over compared to 18% in Selkirk and 16% in West St. Paul. Notably, two of the fastest growing municipalities, East St. Paul and Headingly, have relatively small percentages of seniors in their overall populations.

In terms of absolute numbers, the greatest concentration of seniors living outside of Winnipeg is found in the north-east sector. Collectively, Selkirk, St. Andrews and St. Clements account for 41% of the 9,340 seniors living in the Capital Region outside of Winnipeg.

## Community Population Dynamics: The Example of East St. Paul

The availability of five year age cohort counts from both the 1996 and 2001 census provides opportunity to explore population dynamics within individual communities. Given its rapid population increase, East St. Paul was selected for analysis.

Population change in a given age cohort between two census years can be conceptualized as follows:

$$\text{Population}_{t,a} = \text{Population}_{t-1,a-1} + M_a - D_a$$

where:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| t | = | most recent census period |
| t-1 | = | previous census period |
| a | = | an age cohort |
| a-1 | = | the preceding age cohort |
| M | = | net migration |
| D | = | deaths |

Population cohort data for East St. Paul is shown in Table 5. In 1996, 350 children were in the 0-4 age cohort. By the 2001 census, these children move into the next cohort. However, the 2001 census reports 605 children in the 5-9 age cohort. Assuming that all 350 children flowed through to the next cohort, the difference in cohort size, 255, represents the combined effect of net migration and deaths. In younger cohorts, death rates are likely low and hence the differential is mostly due to migration: in-migration if the number is positive and out-migration if the number is negative. In the oldest age cohorts, negative numbers likely represent the combined effect of high death rates and out-migration to access assisted care facilities not available locally.

The overall results for St. Paul provide cursory insight into possible explanations for the community's rapid population expansion. Positive differential values among middle age and young children cohorts imply an influx of families with children. That positive differentials exist in the 40-59 age cohorts is indicative of an influx of more mature families perhaps moving up in the housing market. Alternatively, the negative differentials in the 20-24 and 24-29 age cohorts suggest an out-migration of younger persons who are likely at the stage of forming a new household and who find it difficult to enter the housing market in East St. Paul or to afford a long commute to employment in Winnipeg on junior level salaries.

Notable as well is the increase in the 0-4 age cohort between the two census years. East St. Paul is one of only three communities in the Capital Region that saw an increase in the youngest age cohort, the others being St. Clements and West St. Paul. Such increases are indicative of either an influx of very young migrants, a strong birth rate or some combination of these two effects.

For comparative purposes, an age cohort analysis of Ritchot, a declining community is shown in Table 6. Note the overwhelming negative differential values as well as a nearly 20% decline in the number of children in the youngest cohort.

## Capital Region in a Prairie Metropolitan Context

The Capital Region is one of five major metropolitan centres located on the Canadian prairies. To conclude this report, Figure 6 provides a brief glimpse of how overall growth in the Capital Region compares to what has been occurring in the Census Metropolitan Areas of

Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon and Regina. Collectively, these five centres had a population of approximately 2.75 million in 1991. Of this total, the Capital Region held the third largest share.

As Figure 5 indicates, population changes over the 1991-2001 decade have not jeopardized the Region's third place standing. What has changed, however, is the Region's relative share of total population. While the Capital Region has not lost population, the growth rate has been considerably lower than what Calgary and Edmonton have experienced. About 90% of the total population growth in these five centres over the last census decade has been captured by Calgary and Edmonton. Consequently, the Capital Region's share of total prairie metropolitan population has dropped from 25.5% in 1991 to 23.2% in 2001.

## Conclusion

The demand for ex-urban living in Manitoba's Capital Region continued to grow in the 1996 – 2001 period. Census data shows 80% of the population growth experienced by the region occurred in its outlying rural municipalities. Moreover, the demand for ex-urban living appears to be spatially selective. A majority of the Capital Region's non-Winnipeg residents reside in a corridor running north east of the city. East St. Paul alone captured 27% of the population gained by outlying municipalities. Analysis of population cohort data suggests that growth here was fueled by the in-migration of middle aged families. While the population of the Capital Region continues to expand, the pace of growth is considerably slower than what has been the case in Calgary and Edmonton.

**(Footnotes)**

[1] For a detailed bibliography of recent government reports and previous research on the Capital Region, see <www.gov.mb.ca/ia/capreg/reports_docs/index.html

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## Tables and Figures

**Population Trends 1996 – 2001**

Total Population, 2001

| Capital Region | Winnipeg | Municipalities |
|---|---|---|
| 711,455 | 619,544 | 91,911 |

Population Change, 1996-2001

| Capital Region | Winnipeg | Municipalities |
|---|---|---|
| 5,570 | 1,067 | 4,500 |

% Population Change

| Capital Region | Winnipeg | Municipalities |
|---|---|---|
| 0.8 | 0.2 | 5.1 |

Table 1

**Population Change in Outlying Municipalities, Capital Region, 1996-2001**

| Municipality | Population Change | % Share of Total Population Change |
|---|---|---|
| East St. Paul | 1240 | 27.6 |
| St. Clements | 599 | 13.3 |
| St. Andrews | 551 | 12.2 |
| Springfield | 440 | 9.8 |
| Macdonald | 420 | 9.3 |
| West St. Paul | 365 | 8.1 |
| Stonewall | 323 | 7.2 |
| Headingley | 320 | 7.1 |
| Taché | 305 | 6.8 |
| Rockwood | 150 | 3.3 |
| Cartier | 111 | 2.5 |
| Rosser | 63 | 1.4 |
| St. François Xavier | 32 | 0.7 |
| Selkirk | -129 | -2.9 |
| Ritchot | -290 | -6.4 |
| TOTAL | 4,500 | 100.0 |

Table 3

## Distribution of Population Among Outlying Municipalities, Capital Region, 2001

| Municipality | 2001 Population | % of Total Population | Cumulative % of Total Population | % of Total Land Area | Cumulative % of Total Land Area |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Springfield | 12,602 | 13.7 | 13.7 | 15.1 | 15.1 |
| St. Andrews | 10,695 | 11.6 | 25.3 | 10.3 | 25.3 |
| Selkirk | 9,752 | 10.6 | 36 | 0.3 | 25.7 |
| St. Clements | 9,115 | 9.9 | 45.9 | 10.0 | 35.6 |
| Taché | 8,578 | 9.3 | 55.2 | 7.9 | 43.6 |
| East St. Paul | 7,677 | 8.4 | 63.6 | 0.6 | 44.2 |
| Rockwood | 7,654 | 8.3 | 71.9 | 16.4 | 60.5 |
| Macdonald | 5,320 | 5.8 | 77.7 | 15.8 | 76.3 |
| Ritchot | 4,958 | 5.4 | 83.1 | 4.5 | 80.9 |
| West St. Paul | 4,085 | 4.4 | 87.5 | 1.2 | 82.1 |
| Stonewall | 4,012 | 4.4 | 91.9 | 0.1 | 82.2 |
| Cartier | 3,120 | 3.4 | 95.3 | 7.6 | 89.7 |
| Headingley | 1,907 | 2.1 | 97.3 | 1.5 | 91.2 |
| Rosser | 1,412 | 1.5 | 98.9 | 6.0 | 97.2 |
| St. François Xavier | 1,024 | 1.1 | 100 | 2.8 | 100 |

TABLE 2

## Population Trends 1996 – 2001

Population 65 and Over, 2001

| Capital Region | Winnipeg | Municipalities |
|---|---|---|
| 96,960 | 87,620 | 9,340 |

Aged 65 and Over, 2001

| Capital Region | Winnipeg | Municipalities |
|---|---|---|
| 13.6% | 14.4% | 10.1% |

Change in Senior Population, 1996-2001

| Capital Region | Winnipeg | Municipalities |
|---|---|---|
| 4.1% | 3.4% | 10.8% |

TABLE 4

**Age Cohort Dynamics in East St. Paul**

| Age Cohort | Population (1996) | Population (2001) | Estimated Net Migration & Deaths |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0-4 | 350 | 360 | |
| 5-9 | 550 | 605 | 255 |
| 10-14 | 605 | 710 | 160 |
| 15-20 | 500 | 650 | 45 |
| 20-24 | 385 | 435 | -65 |
| 25-29 | 175 | 250 | -135 |
| 30-34 | 335 | 295 | 120 |
| 35-39 | 670 | 590 | 255 |
| 40-44 | 705 | 850 | 180 |
| 45-49 | 650 | 775 | 70 |
| 50-59 | 480 | 675 | 25 |
| 55-59 | 325 | 525 | 45 |
| 60-64 | 255 | 335 | 10 |
| 65-69 | 185 | 260 | 5 |
| 70-74 | 120 | 180 | -5 |
| 75-79 | 75 | 110 | -10 |
| 80-84 | 40 | 55 | -20 |
| 85+ | 25 | 30 | -35 |

TABLE 5

**Age Cohort Dynamics in Ritchot**

| Age Cohort | Population (1996) | Population (2001) | Estimated Net Migration & Deaths |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0-4 | 405 | 330 | |
| 5-9 | 510 | 430 | -75 |
| 10-14 | 485 | 480 | -80 |
| 15-20 | 415 | 420 | -5 |
| 20-24 | 305 | 265 | 5 |
| 25-29 | 315 | 260 | -40 |
| 30-34 | 495 | 310 | -55 |
| 35-39 | 495 | 470 | -185 |
| 40-44 | 475 | 440 | -25 |
| 45-49 | 380 | 425 | -35 |
| 50-59 | 320 | 325 | 45 |
| 55-59 | 190 | 275 | 5 |
| 60-64 | 155 | 150 | 85 |
| 65-69 | 160 | 130 | -5 |
| 70-74 | 120 | 110 | -30 |
| 75-79 | 75 | 75 | -10 |
| 80-84 | 50 | 25 | 0 |
| 85+ | 30 | 30 | -55 |

TABLE 6

**Figure 1**
**Population of Outlying Municipalities, Capital Region, 2001**

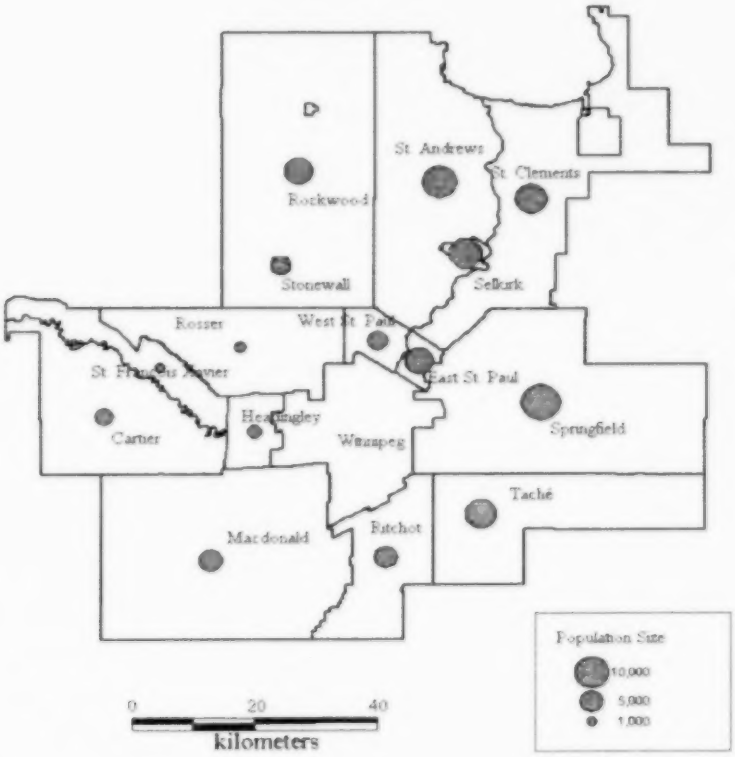

**Figure 2**
**Population Densities in the Capital Region, 2001**

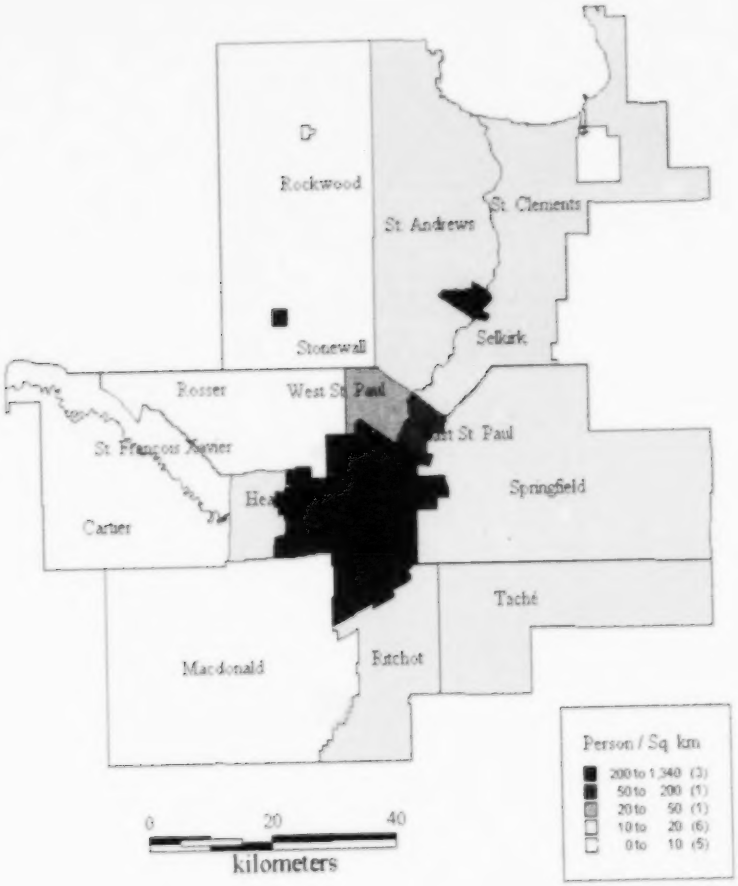

**Figure 3**
**Population Change in the Capital Region, 1996-2001**

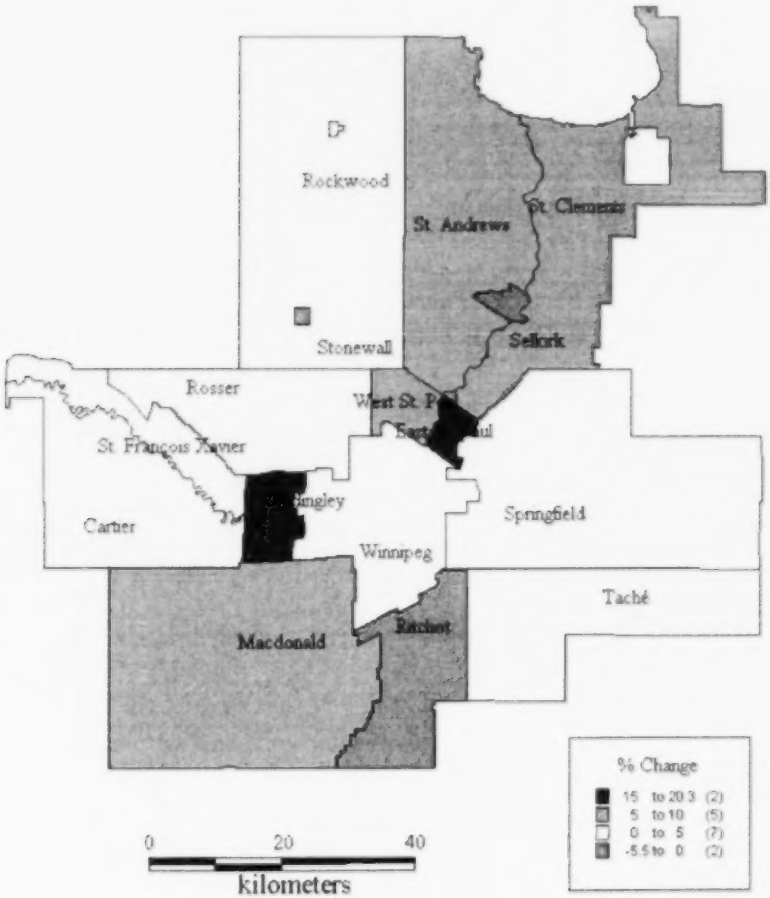

Figure 2
Population Densities in the Capital Region, 2001

Figure 3
Population Change in the Capital Region, 1996-2001

Kilometers

**Figure 5** **Changing Distribution of Population Among Five Prairie Metropolitan Areas, 1991-2001**